

The following comments can be made on the data in Table 1:

***Orthosia cerasi* Common Quaker**

In the period 1988 to 1993 emergence appears to be during the first three weeks of March, with an early appearance in 1990 on 23 February. However, from 1997 to 2002, the norm appears to be the first two weeks of February with late-comers on 26 February in 2000 and 2 March in 1997. Thus, there does seem to be a clear trend towards emergence approximately three weeks to a month earlier over the 14 year survey period. However, the flight period ends consistently over this period, between 12 and 18 May.

***Orthosia gothica* Hebrew Character**

During 1998 to 1993, emergence takes place between 4 and 22 March, with no February reports; in the period 1997 to 2002 it is between 21 February and 20 March, with two of the six reports during February. As with *O. cerasi*, there may be a trend towards earlier emergence, though it is less clear cut in this species. The end of the flight period falls within the range of 12 to 28 May in all years.

***Orthosia incerta* Clouded Drab**

Adults appear consistently between the second and third weeks of March (range 6 to 22 March) except during 2002 when the first record was made on 25 February (nine days ahead of the stated range). This one odd occurrence may be a fluke and is not statistically significant. As with the previous two species, there is no discernible shift in the end of the flight period, last records falling in the period 9 to 26 May throughout the 14 years.

***Xylocampa areola* Early Grey**

Although there is a wide range of first dates, from 4 March to 2 April, there does not seem to be a trend towards earlier emergence. The end of the flight period is, as in the other species analysed, unaltered, falling between 12 and 26 May.

This is all terribly unscientific and I am sure that my academic colleagues will probably excommunicate me! However, it does appear that at least the Common Quaker, and perhaps also the Hebrew Character, may be tending towards a generally earlier emergence. It is of interest that, in spite of this, the end of the flight period is unaltered for all the species studied; for the moths, like me, early retirement is obviously not on! If this snippet of information motivates others to approach the matter in a more scientific manner I shall consider this note to have been well worth writing.—COLIN W. PLANT, 14 West Road, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3QP (E-mail: Colinwplant@ntlworld.com).

A further autumn record of the Common Quaker, *Orthosia cerasi* (Fabr.) (Lep.: Noctuidae)

Brian Goodey (*antea*: 35) reported the occurrence of a specimen of *Orthosia cerasi* (Fabr.) in South Essex on 16 October 2001. I can add that I caught one in my garden in Earley, near Reading (O.S., grid reference SU 735710), almost exactly ten years earlier on the night of 8-9 October 1991. The specimen is in my collection.

My garden mercury vapour trap is not run routinely, but was run on the four nights 7 to 10 October 1991, producing the *cerasi*, expected autumnal species and one late brood example of the pyralid *Hypsopygia costalis* (Fabr.) (on 9 October 1991).—NORMAN HALL, 44 Harcourt Drive, Earley, Reading RG6 5TJ (E-mail: norman.hall@talk21.com).